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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

GENERAL BOOKS AND BOOKS OF ANCIENT HISTORY

The History of Music. A Handbook and Guide for Students. By WALDO SELDEN PRATT, Professor of Music and Hymnology in Hartford Theological Seminary. (New York: G. Schirmer. 1907. Pp. 683.)

IN the prefatory note Professor Pratt indicates the scope of his profusely illustrated and carefully indexed book thus: "It is meant to be distinctly a book of reference for students rather than a literary or critical survey of a few salient aspects of the subject or a specialist's report of original research. Aiming at a certain degree of encyclopaedic fulness . . . at every point an effort is made to emphasize the leading tendencies or movements of musical advance, referring to particular styles and composers as illustrations."

This programme has been carried out admirably. The work contains an amazing amount of generally reliable information brought up to the date almost of the month of publication and presented in clear, concise language. Indeed, too concise when "the leading tendencies or movements" are discussed. Possibly this is noticeable only to the professional historian who finds himself in sympathy with Professor Pratt's keen and thoughtful appreciation of musical evolution and esthetic values and who would prefer a more liberal display of such well-balanced historical ideas to the sometimes monotonous enumeration of facts and mediocrities.

The subject-matter is grouped in the usual manner, leading from "uncivilized and ancient" to medieval music and then by centuries to our own times. Each part of the book includes a summary of musical literature written in the respective period.

By departing from the traditional full stop at the year 1600 and by ending medieval music a century earlier, the author proves that he is willing to break with antiquated traditions. On the other hand, he still insists (pp. 63-64) that "before about 1200 . . . the only kind of music was ritual." Riemann, Aubry and others disproved this popular theory. Nor will the effort to establish (p. 93) the Netherlands as "the new art-centre" at the beginning of the fifteenth century or the statement (p. 97) that about 1420 "all the effects in view were strictly vocal, instruments being employed, if at all, only to double the voice-parts", pass unchallenged. Similar doubts may be expressed as to the absolute correctness of the theory (p. 188) that "in England the dra-

matic form that led toward the opera was the masque" and the reviewer's own researches oblige him to disagree with the author's under-estimation of the English ballad-operas, not as an inferior art-form but as a means of fostering genuine *English* opera. On page 258 the unreserved statement that in Bach's cantatas "the recitatives and arias are of operatic origin", attracts attention. It is therefore not surprising to find that the treatment of early chamber-music, vocal and instrumental, is decidedly less careful and scholarly than that of opera which perhaps receives too much credit in matters of general musical evolution (compare section 134).

One of the features of the book is the effort to keep before the reader's mind the political and social history of each period, thus laying emphasis on the obvious fact, once so foolishly denied by Justus von Liebig, that art is an *essential* factor of civilization. As this method of procedure is quite in keeping with the author's well-known philosophy of art, it is disappointing that he has allowed but scanty space to "musikalische Länderkunde". On pp. 648-650 this branch of musical history is briefly but refreshingly considered for the latter nineteenth-century music in America, and similar though shorter paragraphs may be found in the book but they are too few to convince general historical students (p. 18, introduction) that they have much overlooked the general history of music and too few to show "how musical life has been interlocked with literature and the other fine arts and with the advance of social life in general".

Undoubtedly the book becomes unbalanced towards the end. For instance César Franck has to content himself with one line (p. 585) whereas Karl Reinecke (p. 528) gets twenty! Indeed the space allowed German composers of recent date is clearly out of proportion to their merits *versus* the representatives of "nationalism in music" in other countries. One need but read the paragraphs on recent Scandinavian music (pp. 644-645) to feel that the author is not quite sure of his ground. However, such defects are relatively few in Professor Pratt's work. They can easily be modified and corrected in later editions and do not very perceptibly diminish the value of this very handy and remarkable book.

O. G. SONNECK.

The Greatness and Decline of Rome. By GUGLIELMO FERRERO. Translated by ALFRED E. ZIMMERN, M.A., Fellow and Tutor of New College, Oxford. Vol. I. *The Empire Builders*. Vol. II. *Julius Caesar*. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons; London: William Heinemann. 1907. Pp. viii, 328; vi, 389.)

"THESE two volumes contain a history of the age of Caesar, from the death of Sulla to the Ides of March. They cover the critical years in which Roman imperialism definitely asserted its sway over the civi-